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By-Stokoe, William C., Jr.

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Charles A. Ferguson's concept of "diglossia" (1959, 1964) is used in analyzing sign language. As in Haitian Creole or Swiss German, "two or more varieties" of sign language are "used by the same speakers under different conditions"--these are here called "High" (H) sign language and "Low" (L) sign language. H sign language is formally taught "Manual English," English words fingerspelled or signed. L is the less prestigious form which is used, for example, in communicating with children or in informal conversations. As in other cases of diglossia, speakers may not be aware of, or may even deny the existence of, two distinct varieties, preferring to believe they use only H. Also as in other forms of diglossia, sign language L is simpler grammatically than H. The bulk of vocabulary of H and L is shared, H having more technical terms and L often being used to explain an idea "in words of one syllable." In applying the phonological analysis of diglossia to sign language, it is necessary to ask if H and L constitute a single "gestemic system" and if this system is common not only to users of sign language but all human communicators. It is concluded that sign language diglossia is a special situation but relatively stable and that this condition should be recognized in teaching sign language to the deaf. The author invites correspondence on this issue, c/o Department of English, Gallaudet College, Florida Ave. and 7th, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. (JD)

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SIGN LANGUAGE DIGLOSSIA

Prepublication issue.

William C. Stokoe, Jr., Gallaudet College, Washington, D.C. 20002

Charles A. Ferguson's paper "Diglossia"* adds substantially to the understanding of language and social phenomena. His term diglossia for "two or more varieties of the same language . . . used by the same speakers under different conditions" fits a number of cases that neither bilingualism nor the use of a single language could explain. As he predicts, "A full explanation of it can be of considerable help in dealing with problems in linguistic description, in historical linguistics, and in language typology." Using Arabic, Modern Greek, Swiss German, and Haitian Creole as defining languages he discovers nine features of diglossia, an explanation that has substantially helped our understanding of these and other languages.

It can help too in dealing with a special problem in linguistics. This is the sign language in communities of deaf persons, more broadly in the whole flourishing sub-culture of deaf Americans. Heretofore there have been several narrow and restrictive views of deaf persons and their language. One view shares all the blindness of ethnocentricity. It holds that there is but one language, that of the holder, of course, which must also be the language of all deaf persons within the sound of that language. A counter view holds that the language of signs is the language of the deaf community and must be promoted at all costs. A view more

* Reprinted in Dell Hymes, Language in culture and society. N.Y., 1964. Pp. 429-439. From Word, 15 (1959) 325-340.

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recent is that the deaf community is perforce, and the deaf individual more or less, bilingual in the language of the total culture and in sign language. Resolution of these differences in view has been hindered by a number of special interests and naturally by the fact that one of these languages operates in the normal way with vocal symbols while the other uses visual symbols.

Leaving aside for the moment the serious questions of epistemology and linguistic theory these differences pose, I would like to use Ferguson's nine features of diglossia to examine the two varieties of sign language used by deaf persons in America.

At the outset it must be understood that *some dimensions of the problem are* changed. When the language under study is sign language, the H ("superposed" or "high") variety is English. However this is English in a form most unfamiliar to usual linguistic scrutiny. It is not spoken but uttered in "words" which are fingerspelled or signed. The name for this in H is "The Language of Signs" or "correct signing" or "(grammatical) sign language." Since linguistic study of sign language has increased awareness of the L variety, one of the writer's deaf colleagues has suggested the name "Manual English" for H. The names for L, the ordinary conversational language, differ too. In H it is called simply 'signs' or 'signing', the sign made is the one which translates these English words. Or it may be called 'conversation' using the sign . However this sign may also be used for H or spoken English. In L, the names for L are signs glossed 'talk' or 'chat'. These signs and their distribution are discussed on four pages in the Dictionary (159-162), an instance of where diglossia could have helped to sort an intricate formal and semantic tangle.

1. Ferguson's table, showing "the specialization of function for H and L," is reproduced below with the symbols 's' for sign language H and L added, and the symbol 'o' for cases where the distinction does not apply.

	H	L
Sermon in church or mosque	x s	
Instructions to servants, waiters, workmen, clerks		x s
Personal letters	x s*	
Speech in parliament, political speech	x s	
University lecture	x s	
Conversation with family, friends, colleagues		x s
News broadcast	x o	
Radio "soap opera"		x o
Newspaper editorial, news story caption on news picture	x s*	
Caption on political cartoon**		x s
Poetry***	x s	
Folk literature		x s

* Sign language H is written of course in standard English orthography and read likewise.

** Student posters and papers may use L glossed in "slang" for captioning cartoons.

*** Poetry and songs recited in H, with rhythm and grace of movement cultivated, are favored entertainment and serve as binders of the community and bridges to "hearing" culture. Folk literature and humorous skits are always in L and are "inside" activities; while full dress dramatic performances used to be in H and were shown with pride to outsiders.

2. About the second feature, prestige, Ferguson says: "In all the defining languages the speakers regard H as superior to L in a number of respects. Sometimes the feeling is so strong that H alone is regarded as real and L is reported 'not to exist.'" The writer setting out to study "sign language" in 1957 (the year before Ferguson's first version was read to the American Anthropological Association)

encountered only signers who used H and denied any real knowledge of L. One admitted that he "might sign a little differently" to his wife and children than at college. But most of them were seen using signs and ordering them in a way now called L, when they were not talking to the writer about sign language. Non-deaf recruits to the Gallaudet College faculty are now taught sign language formally, but for years newcomers would ask help of deaf colleagues. In both situations it is H that is taught. Ferguson: "If a non-speaker of Arabic asks an educated Arab for help in learning to speak Arabic the Arab will normally try to teach him H forms, insisting that these are the only ones to use."

Educated users of sign language sometimes refer to "those deaf" and their "awful signing," meaning uneducated persons and L variety of sign language, but forgetful or unaware that they too use L for the situations indicated in the table. To them of course it is too evident to need stating that English is superior, "more beautiful, more logical, better able to express important thoughts. . ." However here the peculiar nature of sign language diglossia appears. When educational power structures or state legislatures prohibit sign language, the educated signers plead for "our beautiful (or beloved) sign language" meaning H. These cogent and eloquent pleas may be found as early as 1847 in the American Annals of the Deaf and as recently as today in The Deaf American and publications of regional or state associations. That is, in one set of circumstances H is considered simply "English"; in another it is considered "sign language" by the same persons. Moreover the sign language community includes bilinguals, hearing speakers of English and users of sign language too. But such are the tensions of sign language diglossia that some of these become the most vehement deniers of the existence of

L while others move freely between H and L and spoken English and become most valuable interpreters not just of language but of those aspects of hearing culture not directly accessible to the deaf. (There is unfortunately almost no cultural interpretation in the reverse direction.)

In spite of these interpreters, always in scarce supply, such is the prestige of H (or English), that many educated signers accept, or are made uneasy by, the repeated statements that sign language is no language at all, has no grammar, is but a collection of "gestures . . . suggestive of . . . ideas."* Makers of such secondary and tertiary responses to sign language range from bilinguals who themselves use L with great effect on occasion to outsiders who make it a point of pride not to learn one form of H or L. Certainly the linguistic schizophrenia they induce is one problem the explanation offered by Ferguson can help cure.

In the matter of literary heritage, sign language H can claim all the literature written in English, for written English is as accessible to the educated signer as to the native speaker -- given equal educational opportunities. But again the signer faces a dichotomy in addition to diglossia. When he reads "aloud" from a literary work, he is using H, but his formal education may have taught him, out of awareness, to feel that just as H is superior to L, so spoken and heard English is superior to signed. "One man's H another man's L" is too true to be funny, and the tensions of a normal diglossia are intensified. This over and above the kind of teaching that convinces a speaker of dialect that Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and

* It would be invidious as well as incriminating to cite all the sources of these much plagiarized non-statements; the reader may consult the bibliography and indexes of works listed; verb. sap.

Henry James belong forever only to his teachers and other speakers of standard, if he hasn't already dropped out before they appear in his education.

3. In the method of acquisition too, sign language diglossia differs from that of Ferguson's four defining languages, but in a way that seems to confirm his general principles. Deaf adults use L in signing to their deaf or hard of hearing children, and deaf children sign to one another in L. But educated deaf adults make a conscious effort to use and teach H (English). Thus the only children that learn L in the "normal" way are those whose family linguistic environment is sign language or bilingual (spoken English and sign language), a small minority.

Others learn L from other children earlier or later as they come together in schools and more or less "normally" as the schools permit or prohibit signing. Signers may not remember when they first used signs (L) or may "never" have used them until leaving school and finding their way into deaf groups. Of course different signers' ease in the language differs greatly not only for these reasons but also because human beings who cannot hear use and develop incipiently linguistic visual symbol systems which interfere with L in various ways. The "native" speaker of L often speaks of those come to it lately as using 'home-signs' (This is the L term; they are called 'home-made signs' in H).

For the signer, even learning H is not like the typical case of learning H in diglossia. Schools that are permissive "teach English" and undertake no formal instruction in H, signed English. However, the best teachers, often themselves deaf, regularly use H <u>and</u> L in teaching the Three R's and the rest of the curriculum -- separating H and L exactly as do teachers in the defining languages.

Another of Ferguson's observations about language acquisition is so pertinent

here it deserves quotation in full after an emphatic condition: even should he learn sign language late in life, "The speaker is at home in L to a degree he almost never achieves in H. The grammatical structure of L is learned without explicit discussion of grammatical concepts; the grammar of H is learned in terms of 'rules' and norms to be imitated."

4. Unlike Arabs who want H to replace L completely, signers do not propose to make everyone use H, because they are too realistic to expect all English speakers use H, convenient as that would be to the sign language community. Nevertheless there are educational specialists who advocate the "Rochester Method." This is an artificial H, if one may augment the terminology of diglossia. Using it the child and all around him fingerspell every word -- signs are forbidden. Thus the utterance spelled is not normal spoken English but written English -- or what would be written if graphic symbols were used instead of dactylological. Stating the claims for it in the terms of diglossia mingled with the terms of its advocates: children would acquire good H in the "normal" way, ungrammatical L would disappear, and the barbarous and destructive interference of L with H would cease. But of course diglossia gives no evidence that there is interference.

The most important fact of language acquisition by the deaf child, seen from the viewpoint afforded by examining diglossia, is that the English (oral, written, or H) which he acquires is the English that has been presented to him in explicit discussion, formal education. There is not only "a strong tradition of the grammatical study of the H form" but there are also special grammars, methods, and aids for teaching it to children who cannot hear. Épée's and Siccard's methodical signs, Wing's Symbols, The Fitzgerald Key, The Barry Five Slates, The Northampton

Charts -- methods spanning two hundred years are added to the libraries of English grammars, dictionaries, and style manuals. This of course accounts only for the English component of H. There are also handbooks, manuals, and vade-mecums telling and showing usually the non-user of L how the forms of H should be properly made. Until 1960 not one took any more notice of L than to mention in passing that sometimes "slang" or "unacceptable" signs might be seen but should be avoided. In 1965 Stokoe, Croneberg, and Casterline in the Dictionary of American Sign Language attempted to describe both H and L. (Though without knowing and using Ferguson's clear insight or terminology.) By 1968 a number of additional normative sign handbooks have appeared.

5. Toward standardization signers take an interesting stance. Members of the sign community regularly commend the writer for his linguistic studies as if, or ask if, his purpose is to "standardize the sign language." It is felt that to do so would be a good thing; but in this context one may suppose that the vague though deep feeling is a desire (1) to reduce the differences between the regional L's, (2) to corroborate the position of some center like Gallaudet College to have the standard L, (3) to label clearly H forms and L forms as such, and even in some (4) to exclude the L forms from good company.

6. In stability and persistence sign language diglossia appears typical. Educated deaf persons were numerous enough to make a linguistic community with some political thrust in Paris education before the end of the Napoleonic era. The differences between Épée's signes méthodiques and what he calls signes naturelles are described by Épée himself and other writers in terms that clearly identify them as H and L respectively. More scattered allusions to different "varieties" or

"correctness" of signing in The United States points to a H and L from 1817. But this crossing of the Atlantic may not immediately have transformed H and L into English and conversational signs. There is considerable evidence for thinking that for some time after 1817 H in the American signing community was in some respects closer to French than to English (There is also a great need for more historical study of sign language). At least early writers attest to the placement of substantive first in two-sign phrases, but "teachers" of H as late as 1955 were maintaining that adjective sign following noun sign was "correct" -- a notion youngsters raised in L soon dispelled.

7. On the score of grammar, sign language might have been one of the languages Ferguson used for defining diglossia: "One of the most striking differences . . . is in the grammatical structure: H has grammatical categories not present in L and has an inflectional system of nouns and verbs which is much reduced or totally absent in L." "Also, in every one of the defining languages there seem to be several striking differences of word order as well as a thorough-going set of differences in the use of introductory and connective particles . . . . <u>There are always extensive differences between the grammatical structures of H and L</u>." (The emphasis is Ferguson's).

It is possible to say that H in sign language has all the inflectional systems of English. So it does potentially, and actually when a word is spelled, not signed. Indeed the H sign-morpheme 'apostrophe s' (Ø A_S) or 's apostrophe' can make visible a distinction not expressed in English speech. But even a signed noun in H may have a plural suffix. Some signers repeat the <u>sig</u> (minimally contrastive movement) of a noun sign for plural. But in L, nouns are uninflected. L verbs are

likewise uninflected.

Sign language L is "simpler" in grammar according to the four tests Ferguson gives. It shows greater difference from H than is shown by any of the four defining languages, when H is equivalent to manually presented English.

1. Thus L has no morpheme alternants in its grammatical system, since its signs remain uninflected.

2. It is without obligatory categories and has no need to observe concord.

3. Paradigms are simpler to the point of non-existence.

4. And since inflection is not found, rection could not be simpler. Adjuncts in L for example are all compared by placing the sign 'more' or 'most' before them. Moreover H uses the articles of English, fingerspelling them because L has none. The same is true of the copula, non-existent in L.

8. Regarding vocabulary it can be said of sign language as of the defining languages, that "the bulk of the vocabulary of H and L is shared." Although the Dictionary lists only some 3,000 signs, these are for the most part signs that can serve both H and L, and also they are more than sufficient for L users in the functions L serves. Conversely, as Ferguson adds, H has "technical terms and learned expressions which have no regular L equivalents, since the subjects involved are rarely if ever discussed in pure L." This accounts for the whole technical and learned vocabulary of English which is in H both through fingerspelling and through the nonce coinage of signs in special situations, some of which remain as items in the H vocabulary.

Sign language diglossia also is typical in that L has borrowed a number of H terms, while the prestige of H serves to keep L signs out. Uncounted times in

checking Dictionary entries with educated signers the compilers would be told: "That sign is all right for ordinary conversation, but . . . ." It might be thought that this one-way gating between H and L and the relatively small L vocabulary would prevent users of L from operating effectively -- is L a "primitive" language? The fact is that such subjects as mathematical concepts, poetic theory, and principles of historiography are of course presented in H; but they may be understood in L. That is, the translation of such matters from the special vocabulary and intricate grammar of H into the signs and context free grammar of L may be most illuminating -- "tell me in words of one syllable" -- for both deaf and hearing users of sign language.

Another "striking feature of diglossia" is the existence of many paired items, one H one L . . . ." It is obvious on first look that a signer is using H not L when fingerspelling is used for short words that have signs in L. At, on, in -- all the prepositions signed in L are spelled in H. One reason is that L signs that gloss English prepositions are not regularly the prepositions' equivalents in many of their uses. Another is that in H the object of a preposition may have to be fingerspelled. Using two letters of the manual alphabet may be "easier" as teachers of H say; but equally, moving the spelling hand away from spelling position to make the L preposition and back will make the spelling harder to read. Put positively, spelling the preposition alerts the reader to watch for spelled item coming. Pairs, spelled in H, signed in L, are not limited to prepositions. Conjunctions present a number of variations on the typical pairing of diglossia. The sign 'and' is shared. That is teachers of H and manuals note that this sign is the only sign permitted in fingerspelling. (Recall that typically H is taught formally, prescriptively.) The

sign 'but' is often used in H signing where it makes a sharper rhetorical break than the spelled word can do; and in fact it makes an excellent reinforcing, rhetorical gesture even completely outside the sign language community. The 'or' is more a part of L, perhaps because as with prepositions vocabulary used contiguously in H may require fingerspelling.

But even nouns and verbs show H and L pairing. Hat, cat, food, eat, sit, go, and many more are regularly fingerspelled in H though they may be signed, but always signed in L. Another place to look for H and L pairs is in the vocabulary of institutional life: refectory, dormitory, recreation have their L vocabulary which is translatable to be sure into English words, but which H perhaps is felt too grand to acknowledge. More investigation is needed to make a complete statement about H and L vocabulary. Doubtless many of the Dictionary classifications will be clarified and the whole vexed question of usage or style levels more sensibly answered when ASL can be thoroughly studied with diglossia as a guide.

There is a 'question-sign' in H, the index finger crooking and straightening draws a question mark about two inches high. L does not use this sign but substitutes for normal clause terminal a question terminal. Also H has a sign for 'apostrophe s'. Although it is used at the end of a fingerspelled noun it will also make a possessive when it follows a personal-name or noun sign, L does not use this sign but uses the flat hand, palm toward the possessor, a sign that is more like a possessive pronoun than like a morpheme to be added to names or nouns.

9. Like any consideration of phonology, Ferguson's crucial statements about the phonology of H and L in diglossia need adjustment to a language that uses visual elements in place of sounds. Here is the first:

1. The sound systems of H and L constitute a single phonological structure of which the L phonology is the basic system and the divergent features of H phonology are either a subsystem or a parasystem.

Do H and L constitute a single gestemic* system? Mallery (1881) develops at length a theory that there is but one gestemic system common not only to the world's sign language users but to all human creatures. Studies in semiotics support his view, emphasizing the functional identify in animal communication as divergent as silkworm scents, wolf howls, and gorilla gestures (Sebeok, 1967). Cultural anthropology seems to run counter to Mallery, paying particular attention to the differences between, and the internal consistency of, culture-bound human systems.

Perhaps sign language linguistics can resolve the apparent contradiction. There is certainly a prelinguistic phonetics -- mynah birds, many mammals, and black boxes in acoustics laboratories share with man the capacity for making sounds that are enough alike to be mistaken for each other. However once the context is a particular language instead of similar sounds, phonology of that language takes on a more restrictive meaning. One can speak too of pre-linguistic gestemics. And there is no reason why this cannot be widely enough defined to include bee or cock grouse dancing, chimpanzee grimacing, human kinesics (a parasystem to language: Birdwhistell, 1952), and sign languages. Again once the universe of discourse is narrowed to a particular sign language, the gestemic inventory of that language and

* This term (Kakamasu, 1968; Ljung, 1965) makes an excellent paralabel to phonological, leaving the writer's cheremic (1961, 1965, 1966) equivalent to phonemic.

its cheremes, its minimal contrasting symbols, become the issue. That other folk in another time or place also move the hand to the mouth to signify 'eat' is now irrelevant.

Of course this does not contradict Mallery. Since all peoples and some of the animal kingdom use gestemics, encountering those who use gestemic symbols organized in a more or less completely linguistic way does not seem strange. However before his projection of "universal sign language" can be realized, it will be necessary for general pre-linguistic gestemics to be developed the world over into a single system of cheremics, morphology, and semology.

According to a paraphrase then of the statement above: the gestemics of H and L constitute a single gestemic structure of which the L gestemics is the basic system and the divergent features of H gestemics are either a subsystem or a parasystem. This is so true of American Sign Language that until the appearance of Ferguson's explanation of diglossia the existence of the two varieties side by side remained unsuspected. Much of the contradiction, controversy, and patent nonsense in published statements about ASL stems from a situation much like that in "The Comedy of Errors" and its Roman and Greek sources. How can Gremio deny he received the money five minutes before? Quite honestly; that was Grumio. How can a beautiful, articulate, nuance-filled language be completely without grammar? Simply when H and L are not distinguished -- and with the further stipulation that the non-linguists who charge that sign language has no grammar must be understood to be saying it has none of the inflectional features of English.

The gestemic structure of L serves H as well, but even the non-signing observer will be struck with the different ways different signers in different

circumstances make "the same sign". Many factors account for this. Regional dialects (Croneberg, 1965), men's and women's sign language, age of signers (Stokoe, 1965), and style level and situation. This last, though, has been given some precise bearings by Ferguson's account.

In using H the signer "refines" his L gestemics. Body parts that were approached in L may be touched noticeably. Hands that were held loosely are tightened into more precise configurations. Movements that flow from one sign to another (sandhi) are omitted and each sign is made with almost military precision. This is the extreme range of H-L contrast -- the difference say between a deaf lay-preacher making an invocation in chapel and discussing a volleyball game in the locker-room. But even where the difference is this great, what has been described is no more than the substitution of one allocher for another. The cheremic system embraces them both.

Fingerspelling may be counted a divergent feature of H gestemics. A hand (configuration-presentation) symbolizes an alphabetic symbol and is non cheremic in the context of other such c-p's. A dez, that is a cheremic configuration (which may look identical with an alphabetic c-p) works with a cheremic place, tab, to make a cheremic action, sig. A dez stays the same dez though it may turn over or back to front in making a sig. But the same configuration in fingerspelling is 'u' presented pointing up, is 'n' pointing down, and is 'h' pointing to the side. The index finger held horizontal is 'g', downward is 'q'. Fingerspelling requires signer and reader to distinguish these differences as well as configurations such as 's', 't', and 'a', which are similar enough to be allochers of one L chereme. Thus fingerspelling is a subsystem of sign language.

Looking at the gestemic structure from morphemics, one sees the elements of L and H morphemes as cheremes but also sees that fingerspelling is a parasystem. Its elements form the words of H just as letters form the words of written English. Semologically too, fingerspelling is a parasystem. H and L dez cheremes have little or no meaning apart from the tab and sig cheremes associated with them in signs, but a configuration-presentation of fingerspelling "means" letters of English orthography.

Again, a characteristic of diglossia:

> 2. If "pure" H items have phonemes not found in "pure" L items, L phonemes frequently substitute for these in oral use of H . . . .

In sign language H, dez cheremes for <u>initial-dez</u> signs retain their strict fingerspelling configuration, but when these signs are used in L the configuration becomes a chereme of L. For example there is very little difference between 'k' and 'v' c-p's of fingerspelling. In the former the thumb tip rests on the middle joint of the middle finger. In the latter it is against the folded-in ring finger. Nevertheless signs like 'keep' and 'supervise' in H preserve this distinction which may be taken to establish 'K' and 'V' as cheremes in H. These signs in L are likely to show no difference in configuration, reducing the two cheremes to one.

The foregoing statements about sign language diglossia are incomplete and subject to revision as more study of sign language verifies, modifies, or discredits them. Nevertheless, taking the position that diglossia is the situation can certainly be "of considerable help in dealing with problems in linguistic description," as should be clear. Another advantage of examining both H and L is the guidance it can provide in dealing with questions of language policy. Knowledge that sign language

embraces not only L but also H which has morphological and semological identity with English is preferable to uninformed opinion that sign language is agrammatical and hampers its users' mental development. Knowledge that diglossia is "a relatively stable language situation" today and in the past should reduce the amount of energy and resources wasted in trying to turn sign language L into "pure" H (Quigley, 1968) in trying to prevent L from corrupting H, and in trying to extirpate both (Fabray, 1968).

Conclusions

Before the sociolinguistic concomitants of sign language diglossia are further explored it is necessary to recall how special a situation it is. Ferguson points out that,

> Diglossia seems to be accepted and not regarded as a "problem" by the community in which it is in force, until certain trends appear in the community. These include trends toward (1) more widespread literacy . . . (2) broader communication among different regional and social segments of the community . . . (3) desire for a full-fledged "national" language as an attribute of autonomy or sovereignty.

First it is chiefly to those concerned with the education of the deaf but outside the linguistic community that sign language and diglossia present a "problem". Their concern, well intentioned as it may be, can create serious problems for the community when it takes the form of statutes against the use of sign language in schools or of educational policy which effectively keeps signs "underground" for the first three or four years -- thus delaying the time when the user of L learns H and moves from a childish L to that of the community. This educational pressure from without forestalls the trend toward more widespread

literacy. The educated and uneducated adult members of the community want all their children who cannot hear to be literate and as highly educated as possible in H, which is English gestemically uttered and understood instead of phonemically. But their children who cannot hear are a minority. Most are not born into the community but join it at schools or perhaps not until four or five years after leaving school (Gorman, 1960). Most of the parents of children who cannot hear are not themselves members and many may actively wish their children not to become members of the linguistic community under discussion. But this does not solve the problems.

Second the desire for broader communication within the community has posed a minor problem for the writer. English-Sign Manuals, and classes in sign language (H of course), have proliferated while within the community reaction to the Dictionary (1965) in which both L and H items were included has been similar to that aroused by a new unabridged dictionary of English. It is only fair to say that more of the reaction has been favorable. But hopes expressed that the Dictionary would "standardize" the language reflect the unease diglossia can generate. The great need of course is for a Dante of sign language who can convince the community that the vernacular has life that is denied to the H variety as he enriches the world with creation in L.

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